

RM2b in unfinished projects show BN 'misled' Sarawak, says Anwar
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 20 — The federal government was today accused of making false promises to Sarawakians, with the Opposition claiming that RM2 billion, or 92 per cent, of projects promised by Barisan Nasional (BN) in the past two years had yet to be completed.

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim told a press conference today the state, which saw record gains for his Pakatan Rakyat (PR) in the April 16 state polls, has seen "the prime minister and deputy prime minister repeating the same announcements every year."

"Yes, the people of Sarawak have been misled," the PKR de facto leader said when asked if BN had cheated Sarawakians with undelivered projects.

The Permatang Pauh MP also pointed out that more than half a billion ringgit of projects were awarded directly without tender.

"This is despite Datuk Seri Najib Razak saying: 'We will ensure the big projects are conducted in an open and transparent way. To ensure a level playing field, we will use competitive tender as the 'default' process. Only in exceptional cases, will we resort to restricted or direct negotiations,'" Anwar said.

The Prime Minister's Department told Parliament in June that RM1.18 billion was spent in the first four months of the year in the East Malaysian state, leading to accusations of vote-buying by PR.

Despite this, PR more than doubled its representation in the 71-member state assembly to 15 after the April 16 election, shattering the coalition's previous invincibility in the "fixed deposit" state ahead of a general election expected soon.

The Malaysian Insider understands that the Opposition coalition continues to view Sarawak as one of the best bets to help add the 30 federal seats it needs to take federal power.

Sources said it was the first state on the agenda for seat negotiations between PR's central leadership that began a few weeks ago ahead of federal polls that are speculated to be held as soon as next month.

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